

flict, by furnishing them with a clear, temperate, reasonable statement of the attitude of the Government in reference to the seceding States, —a statement which would make them feel that the *onus* of beginning the struggle rested upon the disunionists.

It was also intended to strengthen the Union cause in those slave States which had not then seceded, by the presentation of the considerations above given, and also by the unmistakable declaration of the purpose of the Government to resort to arms in case of necessity. But it is not probable that Mr. Lincoln expected that any of the States which had then seceded would be persuaded by his appeal to re-enter the Union.

Mr. Lincoln's statement of his views on the question of the right of secession is important and interesting. "The Union," he says, "is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence. It was further matured, and the faith of all the thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and

establishing the
Constitution was to form a more perfect
Union."

Mr. Lincoln therefore recognized the
historical fact,
that no State had ever had a separate
national existence, or, in truth, any existence at all
save as a State
in the Union,—one of the States
constituting the
United States of America. He did not, it
is true,
state in so many words that this historical
fact might